

Appl. No. 09/725,786
Amdt. Dated October 12, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated April 14, 2004

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated April 14, 2004, the U.S. Patent Examiner has indicated that Claim Nos. 1 – 210 are pending in the subject application. Applicant has revisited this patent application for purposes of filing a fully responsive amendment and takes note that Claim No. 134 was not identified as such in the originally filed application. In this regard, Claim No. 134 originally appeared as Claim No. 135. Certain amendments to the application have been made to cure this error, as described in more detail hereinafter.

Of the claims listed as pending, Claim Nos. 1 – 37, 53 – 89, 104 – 143, and 157 – 196 are allowed; Claim Nos. 38 – 44, 46 – 52, 90 – 96, 98 – 103, 144 – 148, 150 – 156, 197 – 201, and 203 – 210 have been rejected; and Claim Nos. 45, 97, 14, and 202 have been objected to. Further, the U.S. Patent Examiner has stated that the drawings filed on 17 May 2001 are acceptable.

In response to Paragraph No. 1 of the Office Action, Applicant has amended the Abstract of the application as appears on Page No. 2 of 62 of this amendment.

In response to Paragraph No. 2 of the Office Action, Applicant elects to cancel Claim Nos. 38 – 44, 46 – 52, 90 – 96, 98 – 103, 144 – 148, 150 – 156, 197 – 201, and 203 – 210 without traverse.

From an inspection of the Office Action there does not appear to be a Paragraph No. 3 and thus no response to Paragraph No. 3 is herewith submitted.

In response to Paragraph No. 4 of the Office Action, Applicant agrees with the U.S. Patent Examiner's reasons for allowance of the delineated claims.

In response to Paragraph No. 5 of the Office Action, Applicant has elected to cancel the delineated claims and submits herewith newly drafted Claim Nos. 211 – 214. Claim Nos. 45, 97, 149, and 202 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In this regard, newly drafted independent Claim No. 211 incorporates the subject matter of independent Claim No. 38 and dependent Claim No. 45; newly drafted independent Claim No. 212 incorporates the subject matter of independent Claim No. 90 and dependent Claim No. 97; newly drafted independent Claim No. 213 incorporates the subject matter of independent Claim No. 145 and dependent Claim No. 149; and newly drafted independent Claim No. 214

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incorporates the subject matter of independent Claim No. 198 and dependent Claim No. 202.

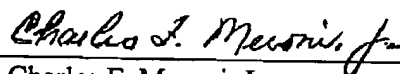
In response to Paragraph No. 6 of the Office Action, Applicant has cured the noted informalities.

Further Claim Nos. 134 – 143; and 157 – 196 have been amended to cure certain numbering errors insofar as originally filed Claim No. 134 appeared as Claim No. 135. All subsequent claims have been amended to reflect a more accurate claim numbering scheme.

In light of the foregoing, it is now believed that this patent application, as amended, is in immediate condition for allowance, and such action is kindly requested. If, after a review of this Amendment, issues remain which may be resolved by as telephone interview, the U.S. Patent Examiner is cordially invited to call the Applicant's undersigned attorney.

If attempts to reach the undersigned attorney are not successful, please be advised that Christopher J. Scott, Registration No. 48,647, may also be contacted with regard to this matter. Mr. Scott has been in regular communication with the undersigned regarding the Office Action and this amendment. Further, Mr. Scott is listed under our firm's Customer Number with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, namely, Customer Number 30114, and thus may be deemed a proper representative of Applicant.

Respectfully submitted,
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